

The Summer Food Service Program

2016 Sponsor Monitor's Guide



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

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Introduction

In this guidance, you will find information on:

- How the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is organized.
- Your responsibilities as a **monitor for the sponsor**.
- The records that you are required to complete and instructions on how to fill them out.
- The meal pattern requirements for meals being served.
- Samples of the forms you'll need to complete.

This guidance is designed to give you, as a monitor for a Program sponsor, a working knowledge of the SFSP, and your duties and responsibilities as the sponsor's representative.

The SFSP provides nutritious meals to children during vacation periods that are similar to those offered under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs during the school year. Meals are provided to children 18 years of age or under, and to individuals over 18 who have been determined by the State to be mentally or physically disabled and who participate in a public or nonprofit school program established for the disabled. Meals are served at open, restricted open, or closed enrolled sites in areas where poor economic conditions exist. Meals also may be served at migrant feeding sites, National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) sites, and residential and nonresidential camps.

Organizational Structure

SFSP sites are operated by public or private nonprofit sponsors - these are school food authorities, colleges and universities, or residential summer camps; by units of local, municipal, county, State, or Federal government; and private nonprofit organizations that meet certain legislated and regulatory criteria. The SFSP is administered within each State by the State education agency, or by an alternate State agency.

Your role as an SFSP monitor is of particular importance. As the key link between the sponsor and the site personnel, you must make sure that the sites operate in accordance with program guidance and requirements. This direct link between the sponsor's office and the food service sites is essential to ensure that the program functions properly. As the sponsor's representative, you must develop and maintain open communications and cooperative relationships with site supervisors and staff. You will also work with the site staff to correct any problems and provide additional training as necessary.

Communication is essential so that the sponsor is aware of any site problems and what is being done to ensure they are quickly resolved. This will also provide opportunities for the sponsor to provide you with any additional guidance you may need. If the sponsor and site are the same entity, work on addressing issues together. If in need of additional guidance, reach out to another

sponsor or the State agency.

The sponsor is financially responsible for any meals served incorrectly or served to ineligible people. This could mean a substantial loss of money to the sponsor if problems at the sites are not corrected. Your responsibilities as a monitor will differ depending on whether meals are prepared on site or delivered to the site(s) by the sponsor or a food service management company (or vendor). This guidance covers monitoring of both types of operations: where the vendor delivers meals to the sponsor's sites and where sponsors prepare their own meals.

Training

The sponsor is required to hold annual training sessions on program duties for monitors and other sponsor personnel. At the training session, the sponsor will do the following:

- Explain monitor duties and responsibilities.
- Distribute monitor review forms and any other records you may need to keep, such as mileage records.
- Train on procedures for monitoring meal counts, adjusting meal preparation or deliveries, reporting complaints to the vendor, and collecting site records.
- Discuss how leftovers are to be handled.
- Assign the sites for which you will be responsible (the sponsor may choose to do it at the training or at some point before you begin your duties).

You also may be asked to attend the training session required for site supervisors. This meeting will familiarize you with the specific duties of site supervisors and allow you to meet the site supervisors with whom you will be working directly.

Many people working at sites may not be familiar with operating food service programs or they may not be accustomed to maintaining records. During your reviews and visits, you may find it necessary to explain the importance of following program rules and show how operations can be improved. This type of ongoing training of site personnel is a basic responsibility of each monitor. You may decide that it is necessary to give new site workers additional training in program and Civil Rights requirements. It is important to document this training in your report.

Monitor Responsibilities

Effective monitoring is necessary for many reasons. Monitoring ensures that sites operate according to program rules and that accurate site records are available to justify payment to the sponsor. But most importantly, monitoring ensures that eligible children in the community are getting nutritious meals. To be an effective monitor, you will be required to spend enough time at each assigned site to observe the meal service operation. Therefore, you must know the program

requirements so you can identify problems at the sites quickly and recommend solutions.

As an official representative of the sponsor, you will be responsible for:

- Monitoring site operations to make sure that the sites maintain adequate records and that the program is operating in accordance with the requirements.
- Conducting site training as necessary, including training on **Civil Rights requirements**.
- Conducting pre-operational visits for new and problem sites.
- Visiting all assigned sites within the first week of operation to ensure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any needed adjustments are made or problems resolved.
- Reviewing food service operations of all assigned sites within the first 4 weeks of operation to thoroughly examine the meal service from start to finish, correcting problems and providing additional training where necessary.
- Reconciling any discrepancies in meal counts and records with the site supervisor.
- Suggesting corrective action to the site supervisor for problems encountered.
- Revisiting sites for follow-up as necessary to ensure corrective action has occurred.
- Preparing reports of your site visits and reviews and ensuring that copies of the reports are included in an official file for each site.
- Informing the sponsor about problems found at a site and ensuring that corrective action is completed and documented.

Visits and Reviews

When monitors observe program operations at sites, they will usually make either a “visit” or a “review.” A site “visit” requires a monitor to ensure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any apparent problems are immediately resolved. A site “review” requires the monitor to determine if the site is meeting **all** the various program requirements. To accomplish this, a monitor will have to observe a complete meal service from beginning to end. All visits and reviews must be conducted as required and documented. *Sample Pre-operational, First Week Site Visit, and Site Review Forms may be found at the end of this manual.*

The type of visits and reviews required are:

- 1. Pre-operational Visits:** Pre-operational visits are conducted for new sites and those that experienced operational problems the previous year before a site operates the summer program. These visits are required to determine that the sites have the facilities to provide meal service for the anticipated number of children in attendance and the capability to conduct the proposed meal service.

- 2. Site Visits:** Sponsors must conduct visits to all new sites and sites that were previously found to be seriously deficient at least once during the first week of operation. These visits are required to make sure the food service operation is running smoothly and to verify information such as the site address, storage, holding and preparation facilities, and serving capacity.

NOTE: Generally, sponsors are required to visit all sites at least once during the first week of operation. However, a waiver to the regulation requirement to visit all sites was established by FNS for sponsors of sites that operated successfully in the previous year. The first week site visit requirement is waived for returning sites that operated successfully during the previous summer in the SFSP (or other most recent period of operation) and had no serious deficiency findings, or that participated successfully in the Child and Adult Care Food Program or the National School Lunch Program. Sponsors of these sites are still required to review the site within the first four weeks of operation.

- 3. Site Reviews:** Sponsors must conduct a review of each site at least once during the first four weeks of program operations. If a site operates less than four weeks, the sponsor must still conduct a review. You will have to observe delivery or preparation of meals, service of meals, children eating the meals; clean up after meals, and completion of site meal count paperwork. During each review you should discuss any concerns or problems with the site supervisor and other site staff. You also should instruct the site supervisor to call the sponsor's office immediately when help is needed and you are not there. As the sponsor monitor, you should document everything on the site visit/review form, including technical assistance and training you provide.
- 4. Follow-up Visits:** Sponsors must conduct follow-up visits for any serious deficiencies that were identified during a site visit or review to ensure that permanent corrective action has been implemented.

Review Procedures

Before reviewing the sites, you should be familiar with the site information sheets that your sponsor will give you. These sheets include the meal delivery schedules (time of delivery, type(s) of meal(s), and number of meals), name of site supervisor, type of site (i.e., closed enrolled, open, etc.) and menus for each site. The site information sheets describe the staffing pattern, method of meal preparation, meal services and times, and the approved level of meal service at the sites.

Sponsors of most sites may be approved to serve up to two meals daily. There are several allowable meal combinations such as breakfast and lunch, breakfast and supper, breakfast and snack, or lunch and snack. Please check with your sponsor for other allowable meals. This does not apply to sites where meals are served primarily to children of migrants or to residential camps. These sponsors may be approved to serve up to three meals or two meals and one snack with State agency approval.

As the summer progresses, you should be familiar with the records submitted by each site and any corrective action taken on any prior reviews or visits.

Conducting the Review



Before the Meal Service Begins

- Plan to arrive at the site before food is delivered or meals are prepared.
- For open sites, check to make sure that there are no barriers preventing all children from receiving meals offered at the site (e.g. locked doors, fees for meal service etc.).
- Check to make sure that the assigned site supervisor or at least one alternate supervisory person who has been trained in program requirements is on-site. This person must be present during the meal service.
- Observe food delivery or meal preparation. Are meals handled according to local health codes? For example, does the refrigerated truck operate at the correct temperature? Are meals delivered on time? If the sponsor prepares the meals, are the facility and equipment adequate for the number of meals needed?
- For sites with delivered meals, observe if the site supervisor is counting the number of meals delivered. Does the number delivered equal the number ordered? Does the delivery receipt show what meal is being delivered and the delivery date and time?
- Observe whether the site supervisor signs only for delivered meals that are complete and wholesome and does not accept poor or incomplete meals or meals that are wholly or partially spoiled.
- Compare the number of meals delivered or prepared on-site with the daily participation records; observe trends and, when appropriate, advise the sponsor and site supervisor to adjust the meal order to prevent excessive leftovers or excessive service of second meals.
- Make sure the site supervisor signs only *accurate* delivery receipts, making corrections as necessary on the slip before signing or refusing to sign if an entire delivery is rejected.

- If the site has refrigeration, check to see if there are left over components, and if so, the number and date of each. Make note if the site is using the first in-first out procedure.

Observe Meal Preparation

- Compare a meal delivered or prepared with the planned menu. Did the meal delivered or prepared that day include the items in the planned menu?
- Observe the preparation of a meal if meals are not delivered.
- Are the portion sizes correct? Were all components included?
- Observe whether workers meet the health standards set by State and local authorities.
- Check to see if any problems found by health officials have been corrected. (Are raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly washed before cooking and serving? Are hot and cold foods kept at the proper temperatures?)

Observe the Meal Service

- Observe the *entire* meal service from delivery/preparing meals to clean up after the meal service. Does the meal service occur within the approved time frame?
- Are children served complete meals?
- Is only one meal served to each child?
- Are non-Program adults served? If yes, do the adults pay for the meals or are non-program funds used to pay for the meals? Do the funds cover the entire cost of the meal? **Is there a system in place for collecting and storing payments?**
- Are all meals eaten at the site? Do the State agency and the sponsor allow a piece of fruit/vegetable/grain to be taken off-site? If so, is the site supervisor able to manage this optional policy adequately?
- Is a site worker counting the meals as they are being served?
- Check plate waste (trash) for acceptability of menu items.
- Check to see that trash is being removed from the site on a regular basis. Are garbage bags and cans closed securely?
- Does the site comply with sponsor and local health department procedures for handling and storing extra food?
- **Does the site use a sharing table and if so, is the site supervisor maintaining proper temperatures?**

Civil Rights

- Check to see if the site's **"And Justice for All"** poster is displayed in a prominent place. If not, the sponsor should provide the site supervisor with the poster.

- Determine if meals are served to all attending children, regardless of the child's race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- Make sure that all children have equal access to services and facilities at the site regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- Observe whether or not informational material in the appropriate languages and translations are accurate and available concerning the availability and nutritional benefits of the program.
- Complete the racial and ethnic data form.
- Observe whether reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to services for limited English proficient persons by providing information in the frequently encountered, non-English languages of individuals eligible to be served or likely to be affected by the program are being taken.
- Make sure that there are reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to ensure individuals with disabilities have equal access and effective communication when accessing the Program.

Meal Counts

- Count the number of first meals served to children.
- Count the number of second meals (if any) served to children. When seconds are served, check to make sure that they are only served after all children present have received their first meal. Determine if the number of seconds being served appears excessive. Remember that all reimbursable meals must be complete meals.
- Count the number of ineligible meals served and note the reason. For example, incomplete meals served or meals served to adults.
- Your sponsor may use “offer versus serve” (OVS). This means that participants may choose not to take one or more items that are offered. At these sites, a complete meal would be a meal that meets the OVS rules established by your State agency and sponsor. Check with your sponsor to make sure you understand the OVS rules.
- Do your counts and the site supervisor's counts match?
- Some sites you review may have been approved to serve a maximum level of meals at each meal service. Check with your sponsor to make sure that sites with such approval do not claim meals in excess of the maximum number approved for each meal service.
- Review daily records kept by the site supervisor. Determine whether they are complete and accurate records. Determine whether meal count records are being completed at the time of meal service. Meal count records should not be completed in advance before the meal is served.
- Check records to see if the same number of meals has been claimed for three or more days, and if this number is inconsistent with the number of meals served the day of the review. If the site has been claiming a much higher number of meals than you observe

being served on the day of review, this may be a problem. A follow up review should be made, and the sponsor may need to adjust the site cap downward for that site.

- If meals were served outside the approved time frame, were they disallowed? Determine whether the approved meal service time needs to be changed to better accommodate the schedule of meal delivery or other activities at the site. The sponsor will need to submit the meal service time request to the State agency for approval.
- Are there many leftover meals? If adjustments are not being made, instruct the site supervisor to make adjustments in the meal order as necessary.
- How are seconds being recorded?
- Compare all counts and calculations with the site supervisor's corresponding records and resolve any discrepancies.
- If any additional foods were served, were they foods creditable under the meal pattern requirements?

Before You Leave the Site

- Complete the monitor's review form. Record your arrival and departure times. Record all violations and any corrective action taken.
- Make corrections on site, if possible. Be sure to document all corrective action.
- Report problems to the sponsor.
- Conduct another visit, if necessary.

Monitor Site Review Form

You must complete a monitor site review form after each review. Your sponsor will provide you with these forms. The form includes your arrival and departure times, the site supervisor's name, certification statement of violations found, corrective action taken, and time and number of meals served. These forms are required records for the sponsor.

You must thoroughly explain the specific nature and extent of any problems and the action to be taken to correct these problems. For example, for meals observed to be missing a required component (such as milk) served at a site not implementing the offer versus serve provision, record "19 meals served without milk" and then document the action the site supervisor agreed to take to correct the problem. For example, "those 19 meals will not be claimed for reimbursement for today".

Additional Responsibilities

Racial and Ethnic Data Form

You must complete a racial/ethnic data form to report the categories of participating children at each site. This form must be completed at least once during the site's operation or once per

session for camps. A sample Racial/Ethnic Data Form is included in the attachment section behind tab 8.

You should determine a child's racial and ethnic categories visually using your best judgment. Ethnicity according to this data form consists of two categories - Hispanic/Latino and **not**-Hispanic/Latino - while the racial categories include a more specific breakdown. Because you should complete both a racial and ethnic categorization for each child, the total number of children in the two different categories should match. A child may be included in the racial and ethnic categories to which he or she appears to belong, identifies with, or is regarded as a member of by the community. Racial and ethnic categories should be identified for each child.

Potential Meal Service Problems

Experience has shown that monitoring the food service at sites is necessary to ensure good meal quality. Problems need to be solved quickly and routinely. As a monitor, you need to remind site supervisors often of their responsibility to promptly report changes in participation (up or down) to the sponsor. You also may need to explain to the site supervisor how to report participation changes. If a site has a maximum approved level for meals, you should emphasize that your sponsor will not receive reimbursement for the meals that exceed the maximum approved level for each meal service.

Sometimes participation at sites drops during the summer and the sponsor is not notified. When this happens, either too many meals are delivered or too much food is prepared and both food and money are wasted. The site supervisor should guard against ordering or preparing too many meals. *This is a serious violation.* If a site is receiving or preparing too many meals, you should emphasize to the site supervisor that the meal order must be adjusted and report that need to your sponsor.

This is especially important because excessive leftovers or seconds or the number of meals prepared may affect the sponsor's claim (second meals served in excess of two percent of first meals for the claiming period are not reimbursed). You must follow your sponsor's procedures for transferring the extra meals to another site, returning meals to the vendor, or stopping the meal service. Keep in mind food safety rules, including temperature requirements.

Site Activities

As the monitor, you are responsible for staying informed about the plans of each site supervisor. Know the activity schedule of each assigned site. If the site will not be open on a certain day, the sponsor must be alerted in advance so meal deliveries can be cancelled and reviews are not scheduled for that day.

If the site is planning a field trip that will affect the time or location of meal services, the sponsor must notify the vendor, if applicable, and should inform the State agency. The State agency also should be notified of any changes (additions and/or cancellations) to scheduled field trips. Care must be taken to ensure the safety and quality of the meals during field trips by using adequate storage equipment to transport them.

Sometimes sponsors experience problems because sites stop operations earlier than originally scheduled. As the monitor, you should ensure your sponsor is promptly notified if the site decides to close earlier than the date indicated on the site information sheet.

On-site activities encourage kids to keep coming back and to bring along their friends. Therefore, let your sponsor know if you observe any activities at sites that could be used to help promote the SFSP and increase participation at other sites.

Recordkeeping

Daily Meal Count Records

Sponsors will provide site supervisors with a supply of daily record forms. This form is very important and must be completed each day. Sponsors will not receive money for the meals served at their sites if the sites do not keep this daily record. This record must be accurate, and site staff must enter the appropriate information at the end of each meal service. You may be required to collect this record daily or weekly from each site, and return them to the sponsor's office. A frequent, regular method of collection is necessary to minimize the possibility of losing these records, since sponsors receive reimbursement for the meals they serve based on this daily record.

This record must include the number of meals delivered or prepared, by type (breakfast, snack, lunch, supper). Vended programs must support this information with a signed delivery receipt. Programs with a central kitchen also should support this information with a signed delivery receipt. A designated member of the site staff must verify the adequacy and number of meals delivered by checking the meals when they are delivered to the site.

The record also must include the number of:

- Complete first meals served to children, by type.
- Complete second meals served to children, by type.
- Extra meals or meals left-over.
- Non-reimbursable meals.
- Meals served to program adults, if any.
- Meals served to non-program adults, if any.
- Meals leftover from previous day, if any.
- Meals discarded (i.e., dropped, spilled, test meal, etc.), if any.
- Meals transferred to another site or meals transferred in, if any.

Daily Record Reviews

Review the daily records kept by the site supervisor. Check to make sure forms are completed and signed. If meals are not prepared on site, the information on the delivery receipts should

match the information on the forms. Site supervisors should have a signed delivery receipt available to show the deliveries for all meals served. The delivery receipt should at a minimum indicate what meal has been delivered, the number of meals delivered and the delivery date and time. If the number of meals delivered is the same as the number served each day, or the same number of meals is recorded each day, this may mean that no one is actually counting the number of meals received and served. Be sure to observe and take appropriate corrective action.

Accuracy of Records

Remind site supervisors that complete and accurate daily records at the site level are the only way to document program performance and guarantee the sponsor's reimbursement. The only basis for reporting the number of meals served is accurate daily records. These records account for all categories of meals served and are signed by the site supervisors. Familiarize yourself with the forms to be used for this purpose since you will be assisting site supervisors in the proper use of these forms.

Collection of Site Forms

If your responsibilities include collecting site forms and delivery receipts, be sure to stick to one collection schedule. If records cannot be obtained from a particular site, this is a *serious* problem that your sponsor should know about immediately.



Meal Pattern Requirements

As a monitor, you will check meals at sites to see that the meal pattern requirements are being met. These requirements ensure well-balanced, nutritious meals that supply the kinds and amounts of foods that children require to meet their nutrient and energy needs. You must make sure that meals served at your assigned sites meet the meal pattern requirements listed on the following page.

Monitoring Meals

Compare the menus of the meals to be served at each site with the meal pattern requirements and learn to recognize meal problems. Remember that each meal must contain all required components and that the served quantity of each component must meet the minimum portion size. If meals are incomplete, if portions are too small, or if the food is spoiled, children are not getting a nutritious meal. Spoiled food, juice, or milk can make the children sick. Make sure site personnel do not serve any spoiled food to children.

If meals are delivered by a vendor, the site supervisors should record any deficiencies on the delivery receipts and discuss any problems with you. You should immediately report any problems with deliveries or meals to the sponsor so that the vendor can be promptly notified.

Reimbursable Meals

For a Meal to be Reimbursable it Must Contain:*		
Breakfast	Lunch or Supper	Snack
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- One serving of milk.- One serving of a vegetable or fruit or a full-strength juice.- One serving of grain or bread.- A meat or meat alternate is optional.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- One serving of milk.- Two or more servings of vegetables and/or fruits.- One serving of grain or bread.- One serving of meat or meat alternate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Must contain two food items from different components.- Juice cannot be served when milk is served as the only other component.

* At sites where “offer versus serve” is allowed, meals that are offered to participants must meet the meal patterns as shown in the chart above.

Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns

FOOD COMPONENTS AND FOOD ITEMS	BREAKFAST Serve all three	LUNCH OR SUPPER Serve all four	SNACK Serve two of the four
Milk	Required	Required	
Fluid milk	1 cup ¹ (½ pint, 8 fluid ounces) ²	1 cup (½ pint, 8 fluid ounces) ³	1 cup (½ pint, 8 fluid ounces) ²
Vegetables and Fruits - Equivalent quantity of any combination of...	Required	Required	
Vegetable or fruit or	½ cup	¾ cup total ⁴	¾ cup
Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice ⁵	½ cup (4 fluid ounces)=50% ⁵		¾ cup (6 fluid ounces) ⁶
Grains/Breads⁷ - Equivalent quantity of any combination of...	Required	Required	
Bread or	1 slice	1 slice	1 slice
Cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, etc or	1 serving ⁸	1 serving ⁸	1 serving ⁸
Cold dry cereal or	¾ cup or 1 ounce ⁹		¾ cup or 1 ounce ⁹
Cooked cereal or cereal grains or	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Cooked pasta or noodle products	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Meat and Meat Alternates - Equivalent quantity of any combination of...	Optional	Required	
Lean meat or poultry or fish or	1 ounce	2 ounces	1 ounce
Alternate protein products ¹⁰ or	1 ounce	2 ounces	1 ounce
Cheese or	1 ounce	2 ounces	1 ounce
Egg (large) or	½	1	½
Cooked dry beans or peas or	¼ cup	½ cup ²	¼ cup ²
Peanut or other nut or seed butters or	2 tablespoons	4 tablespoons	2 tablespoons
Nuts or seeds ¹¹ or		1 ounce=50% ¹²	1 ounce
Yogurt ¹³	4 ounces or ½ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup	4 ounce or ½ cup

¹ For the purposes of the requirement outlined in this table, a cup means a standard measuring cup

² Served as a beverage or on cereal or used in part for each purpose

³ Served as a beverage

⁴ Serve two or more kinds of vegetable or fruits or a combination of both

⁵ Full strength vegetable or fruit juice may be counted to meet not more than one-half of this requirement

⁶ Juice may not be served when milk is served as the only other component

⁷ Bread, pasta or noodle products, and cereal grains (such as rice, bulgur, or corn grits) shall be whole-grain or enriched. Cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, etc, shall be made with whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal shall be whole-grain, enriched or fortified

⁸ Serving sizes and equivalents will be in guidance materials to be distributed by FNS to State agencies

⁹ Either volume (cup) or weight (ounces), whichever is less

¹⁰ Must meet the requirements of 7 CFR 225 Appendix A

¹¹ Tree nuts and seeds that may be used as meat alternate are listed in program guidance

¹² No more than 50 percent of the requirement shall be met with nuts or seeds. Nuts or seeds shall be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the requirement. For purposes of determining combinations, one ounce of nuts or seeds is equal to one ounce of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish

¹³ Plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened



Delivery of Meals

Make sure the site supervisor and designated site personnel know that meals must be delivered within one hour before each meal service if proper facilities do not exist on-site for storing the food.

Meals Service Times

Sponsors are required to establish meal times for each site. Therefore, in addition to making sure that meals served meet the meal pattern requirements, you must ensure that the meals are served at the times approved by the State agency.

Unitized Meals

All meals must be served as complete units, **except at sites with Offer versus Serve (OVS)**. This means that every component of the meal must be served to the child at the same time (except at sites where OVS is allowed). Sometimes site workers might want to split up a meal between several children or serve an incomplete meal to a child. Except where OVS is allowed, the complete meal **must** be served to each child as a unit. The nutritional value of the meal depends on each child receiving all the components. *Serving incomplete meals or serving components separately are serious violations*. Your sponsor cannot receive reimbursement for incomplete meals served to children.

Meal Pattern Exceptions

Substitutions or modifications to the meal patterns must be given to participants with disabilities who are unable to consume the regular program meals. These substitutions must be supported by a statement from a **licensed physician or a licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law**. The medical statement must identify the disability, why the disability restricts the child's diet, the major life activity affected by the disability, the foods to be omitted and the foods that can be substituted.

In some cases, sponsors may be approved to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements of other Child Nutrition Programs instead of the SFSP meal pattern requirements. Variations in the meal patterns may also be approved where there is evidence that the variations are nutritionally sound and are necessary to meet ethnic, religious, economic, or physical needs.

Offer versus Serve (OVS)

OVS is a serving option for sponsors. At OVS sites, a complete meal that meets the SFSP meal pattern requirements, as shown on page 14, must be offered to participants. However, participants may choose not to take one or more of the food items offered.

Your sponsor will provide you with the appropriate requirements for the sites you are monitoring that have been granted any exception to the SFSP meal patterns.

Keep These Food Safety Rules in Mind

- Bacteria can grow rapidly between 40°F and 140°F, which includes room temperature. This is known as the *danger zone*.
- Avoid holding foods in this temperature *danger zone*. Do not hold a food in the temperature *danger zone* for longer than two **hours**. After two hours discard the food.
- Keep meals and milk not being served at the time in the refrigerator or cooler at a temperature of 40°F or below. Hot meals should be in a warming unit or insulated box at a holding temperature of 140°F or more.
- Remember that you cannot determine food safety by sight, taste, odor, or smell. If there is *any* doubt, throw the food away.
- Train food service employees on safe food handling, on the safe use of all types of equipment, and on personal hygiene.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and first-aid kit handy and instruct all personnel in their use.

The four core messages of Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill will help you keep your food safe to eat.

CLEAN

- Wash hands frequently and properly, for at least 20 seconds with soap and *hot* water. Use a *separate* hand wash sink, not sinks used for food preparation or dishwashing. Always wash hands after touching hair or face.
- Use disposable towels when drying hands. Discard disposable towels after each use.
- Cough or sneeze into disposable tissues **ONLY**, and wash hands afterwards. If you sneeze on food or food production areas, discard the food and clean and sanitize the food production area.
- Persons with colds, or other communicable diseases should **not** be permitted to work in food preparation areas.
- All superficial cuts should be covered with a bandage and a disposable glove.
- Any person with an infected cut or skin infection should **not** be permitted to work with food.
- Use disposable gloves properly. Wash hands before putting on gloves, avoid touching skin, carts, refrigerator, freezer, oven doors, money, or any unclean surfaces. Throw the gloves away after using or touching anything other than food.
- Follow instructions exactly on how to use and clean kitchen equipment.
- Keep all equipment such as cutting boards, can openers, grinders, slicers, and work surfaces clean and sanitized. Sanitize equipment and work surfaces between use with raw and cooked foods. Check with local health department codes for a list of sanitizing agents.
- Use plastic cutting boards. Purchase adequate number of cutting boards to prevent cross contamination during food production.
- Empty garbage cans daily. They should be kept tightly covered and thoroughly cleaned. Use plastic or paper liners.

Keep These Food Safety Rules in Mind

SEPARATE

- Avoid cross-contamination.
- Use appropriate utensils to pick up and handle food.
- Never touch ready-to-eat foods with your bare hands.
- If using hands, wear disposable plastic gloves and do not touch anything unclean with the gloves. Throw the gloves away after using or touching anything other than food.
- Prepare sandwiches and salads with a minimum amount of handling.
- As a food safety precaution, you may want to use two sets of cutting boards: one for meats, and one for vegetables and fruits. Buying plastic cutting boards in different colors will help to keep them straight.
- Prevent juices from raw meat, poultry, or seafood from dripping on ready-to-eat foods, such as salad greens, either in the refrigerator or during preparation.
- Store ready-to-eat foods *above* raw uncooked foods.

COOK

- Be sure thermometers are available and use them properly. Calibrate thermometers on a regular basis.
- To make sure that meat and poultry are cooked all the way through, use a food thermometer.
- Cook foods to minimal required internal temperatures for safety.

Minimum Internal Temperatures for Safety

(based on the 2005 FDA Food Code)

165°F for 15 seconds	Poultry, stuffing, stuffed fish, pork or beef; pasta stuffed with eggs pork, casseroles, reheating leftovers.
155°F for 15 seconds	Ground meats, beef, lamb, veal, pork, pasteurized eggs held on steam table, cubed or Salisbury steaks, fish nuggets or sticks
145°F for 15 seconds	Seafood, beef, pork, veal steaks, & roasts (medium rare), eggs cooked to order and served immediately.
140°F for 15 seconds	Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables that are going to be held on a steam table or in a hot box.

- DO NOT partially cook foods. Partial cooking may encourage bacteria to grow before cooking is completed.
- If the serving of a hot food must be delayed, keep it at a holding temperature of 140°F or above.

CHILL

- Keep cold foods COLD! (Refrigerate or chill food at 40 °F or below)
- Keep frozen food in a freezer at 0 °F or lower.
- Cool hot food from 140°F to 70°F within two hours. If during the cooling process food temperatures do not reach 70°F immediate action is required or food must be discarded. Cool foods from 70°F to 40°F or below within four hours. DO NOT ALLOW ANY FOODS TO COOL AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.
- Refrigerate or freeze properly cooled leftovers in covered, two inch shallow containers.
- Divide large containers of soups, sauces, or vegetables so that the smaller portions will cool more quickly. Stirring throughout the chilling process will shorten the total cooling time. An ice paddle or ice bath will also help to rapidly cool foods.
- Leave airspace around containers or packages to allow circulation of cold air so that rapid cooling is ensured.
- Once cooled, tightly cover and date leftovers.
- DO NOT THAW FOODS AT ROOM TEMPERATURE. Thaw poultry and meat in a refrigerator and not on counters. Refreeze only if ice crystals are still present.

Questions and Answers

1. As a monitor, what are some of my major responsibilities?

You are the direct link between the sponsor and the sites – the official representative of the sponsor. It is your responsibility to ensure the sites operate smoothly and in accordance with program guidance and requirements, by checking site operations, conducting training with site personnel when necessary, conducting pre-operational visits for sites, and conducting visits and reviews of all your assigned sites. You also must reconcile meal counts, prepare accurate reports of your visits and reviews, and inform your sponsor and site supervisors of any problems found. A description of your responsibilities can be found in the Introduction section of this guide.

2. What is the difference between a site “visit” and site “review”?

When you monitor program operations at a site, you will make either a “visit” or a “review.” A site “visit” requires you to make sure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any problems are immediately resolved. A site “review” requires you to determine if the site is meeting all program requirements. To accomplish this, you will have to observe the entire meal service from beginning to end. All visits and reviews must be documented. You will find a sample visit and review forms at the end of this handbook, but you should use the forms provided by your sponsor.

3. What are some of the things I should look for during the meal preparation or meal service?

On the day of your visit, you should observe the meal preparation and if meals are delivered, note if they were delivered on time. If prepared at the site, note if the meals were prepared within the health and safety standards required by the sponsor and the local or State health authorities. When observing the meal service, note the number of meals delivered or prepared, the number of complete meals served to children and program adults, the number of leftover meals, the number of non-reimbursable meals served, if any, and whether or not the meals are being counted accurately by site personnel. You also should ensure that nondiscrimination posters are in place and that all children have access to and are being served meals. Finally, you should complete your forms before you leave, and make corrective actions on site, if at all possible. A full listing of what to look for can be found in the Visits and Reviews section of this guide.

4. Should I be concerned with food safety, or is that the responsibility of the workers at the site?

Although it is a primary responsibility of site staff to ensure meals are being safely prepared, it is your responsibility to report whether they are taking appropriate steps to make sure the foods they receive or prepare are safe for children to consume. Determine whether staff checks the temperature of foods they receive from a central kitchen, or whether they check the temperature of foods they prepare on-site. Note where and how they store foods, and check that the temperatures on refrigerators or freezers are adequate. During food

preparation, check to see if staff is following local or State health and safety standards. Also ensure that there are fire extinguishers and first aid kits nearby and available for use.

5. What is a meal pattern requirement?

A meal pattern is a listing of required food components that must be served to the children participating in the SFSP. Each component in each meal must be present in order for your sponsor to receive reimbursement for that meal. When the meal pattern requirements are followed, not only does the sponsor receive proper reimbursement, but the child eating the meal receives a well-balanced, nutritious meal that supplies the kinds and amounts of foods that will meet their nutrient and energy needs. You can find the SFSP Meal Pattern Requirements in this guide.